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4. Felling—yup chign or yup chichign. The felling of the trees is almost an art in itself, for doing it in good style requires knowledge and ability, a steady eye and calculation, especially as to how the trees will fall or how they must be cut in order to fall in the most desirable way. There is a certain method involved in felling trees: a larger tree is chosen (whenever possible, in one of the corners, or at least on one of the higher sides of the ground), and an imaginary line is drawn enclosing a strip /of ground/ that broadens out in the shape of a wedge. Within this strip, all trunks are chopped about halfway through, until they begin to snap. But the larger tree is chopped last, all the way through, and felled. It falls on the neighboring, half-cut trees, dragging them down in its fall, and through them all the other trunks within the chosen and prepared wedge. An entire strip of forest thus goes down at one fell swoop with a big noise, opening an enormous clearing, sometimes 100 meters long or more. Then, whatever timber may have been left standing is felled, and so are the remaining corners, "to straighten out the shape," rounding off or squaring off the plot. But "only these are cut down one by one."

[221] The felling of trees is usually carried out in April and May. The time of felling is determined by that of clearing, which precedes it by about two to four weeks. As a rule, the Mundurukú takes three days' work to do the felling on an average plot.

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5. The burning—imapign. The vegetation felled to clear the new plot is kept "resting" for two months or more, in order to dry thoroughly. The Mundurukú usually burn their clearings around the month of August. They grant the sun sufficient time to dry even the larger trunks. This relatively long spell /is granted/ so that the vegetation may burn as thoroughly as possible. The burning then becomes a light and easy task. Whatever trunks may still chance to remain after the burning are left right there, and are frequently utilized as a source of firewood for the village or house. As a rule, the plots of the Mundurukú are quite thoroughly burned.

/10/ To set the fire, they choose a breezy day when the wind is not too strong. Thus the breeze feeds the flames but does not allow